

HealthWatch: Keys to Emergency Preparedness

The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks have prompted new emphasis on emergency planning by communities, businesses and organizations. It has even generated the establishment of a new cabinet-level department focusing on the protection of Americans against terrorist attacks.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Ready.Gov Web site, www.ready.gov, says it's important to think about the places where you and your family spend time and know about their emergency plans. Then create your own plan.

The American Red Cross has information for individuals and families' emergency planning based on the Homeland Security Advisory System available on their Web site, www.redcross.org, and is a basic "how to" on putting together a plan.

Other planning steps include:

- Know how to contact each other.
- Know how and where to get emergency information
- Talk to your neighbors to see how you can collaborate in an emergency.

For more info, go to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Ready.Gov Web site, **www.ready.gov**, and the American Red Cross **www.redcross.org**.

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